

WCSA Class Descriptions Spring 2021

The Westport Center for Senior Activities (WCSA) is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for adults age 60 years or older by offering the opportunity to continue to learn and develop; to maintain optimum physical, mental and social well-being; and to enjoy recreation and companionship in a pleasant and safe environment. The WCSA offers programs in the arts, exercise, culinary, French language study, wellness, current events, and support groups. Below is a list of class descriptions, and on page 6 you will find the instructors biographies in alphabetical order.

- Art, Music & Writing Classes:

Advanced Writer's Workshop: Now in its sixth year, The Writer's Workshop at the WCSA continues to inspire and support the individual exploration and creative goals of each participant. Through exercises, readings, prompts, informal instruction, and guided discussion, we strive to foster personal growth and accomplishment. So, if you have a work in progress, a story that's been stuck inside your head, moments you would like to commit to memory, or you're simply moved by words, this workshop is for you. Pre-requisite: prior participation in Advanced Writer's Workshop or approval of instructor. Instructor: Jan Bassin. Limit: 8 people per section.

Bringing the Outdoors In: Painting Landscapes: Working from photos, the class will study composition, light, color, and value. Stretch your sense of form, color, content, and the image-making process. Paint and draw in any media of your choice. Instructor: Chris Goldbach. Class limit: 20

Continue to Play the Ukulele: Join Wendy Matthews of the Educated Fleas and continue to improve your playing skills. You do not need to be able to read music, just come and have fun! *This is not a beginner's class but requires some experience in playing the Ukulele.* Instructor: Wendy Matthews. Class limit: 12

Drawing, Mixed Levels: This class is for someone with some drawing skills or those looking to sharpen existing skills or an utter beginner who is ready to delve deeper than just doodling. Basic media and techniques will be explored with a variety of subjects. Instructor: Chris Goldbach. Class limit: 15

Drawing Flowers: This course focuses on a different flower each week, looking closely at the parts and discovering what characteristics make it different. We draw the flowers in pencil with emphasis on accuracy and form. Instructor, Dick Rauh is a botanical artist and teacher living in Westport. His work appears in many public and private collections throughout the country. Instructor: Dick Rauh. Class limit: 18

WCSA Class Descriptions Spring 2021 (continued)

Knit One – Nibble One: Join our Zoom program to knit a healing shawl for people diagnosed with cancer. These cozy shawls provide a “hug” to those battling this disease. A tote bag with yarn, needles, directions, and a gift of Nelle’s Nibbles is included. This is a perfect (easy) all knit project. Experienced knitters are welcome to create their own patterns. For crochet, you may use a size 13 (N) hook. Instructor: Ellen Lane. Cost: \$25.00 for kit paid to instructor at the first class. \$12.00 thereafter for additional shawl yarn. *Note: This is not an instructional program.*

Origami Sculpture: Nor Smitobol will be teaching a class in 3–D origami sculpture. Learn to make the basic fold and then create 3-dimensional sculptures. Instructor: Nor Smitobol. Class limit: 6

Pastels in Spring: Explore and enjoy the colors of Spring as you create pastel pallets. Colors change with soft greens and yellows, as well as, blues. We'll work with lighter moods as we create brighter skies, introduce flower studies and much more as we render the beauty of Spring awakenings. Instructor: Lisa Arnold. Class limit: 12

Write with Us! A Writing Prompts Workshop: Writing prompts spark memory, inspire creativity, and help writers and non-writers alike find out what they think and feel. They can unlock doors. A writing prompt can be almost anything -- a single word, an image, a statement, or question. Join Jan Bassin for this playful, enriching, and evocative workshop. Those with little to no experience in writing, as well as seasoned writers, are sure to benefit! Instructor: Jan Bassin

• WCSA Exercise & Dance Classes

Cardio/Strength Intervals: This alternating cardio/strength workout will get your heart pumping and your muscles moving - all to motivating music! Instructor: Shelley Moll

Dance & Stretch: A dance inspired cardio fitness program that is great for men and women. Learn the basic steps of Merengue, Mambo, Cha Cha, Foxtrot, Waltz and Tango. No partners required. Instructor: Sandy Adamczyk. Class limit: 16

Essentrics – Gentle Stretch: Essentrics is a no–impact fitness program that combines stretching and strengthening with gentle, flowing exercises. This unique workout may help relieve chronic conditions such as back and neck pain, arthritis, bursitis, plantar fasciitis, and sciatica. It also increases mobility, improves balance, and keeps joints healthy. This class is done standing or using a chair. Instructor: Dyan DeCastro. Class limit: 12

WCSA Class Descriptions Spring 2021 (continued)

Muscle and Tone: This new class with 40 minutes of strength training uses hand-held weights. Participants should have one to two sets of free weights, a mat for floor work, a sturdy chair and/or a fitness bench. Class will include a warm-up with stretching, lower and upper body strength training, balance, and core work on a mat for a fun total body workout that will leave you energized and feeling great! Instructor: Judy Samuels
Class limit: 12

Pilates: An exercise system focused on improving flexibility and strength for the total body with a series of controlled movements with a strong focus on the core connecting to your body and mind. Students must have their own mat, strap, two pillows and be able to get up and down from the floor without help. Instructor: Jeannie Stevens Labate

Strength Training: This class emphasizes flexibility and balance exercises to stretch and strengthen all muscle groups. Hand weights can be used for students that are knowledgeable and experienced with the exercises. Instructor: Sandy Adamczyk

Tai Chi: These classes teach the traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, a gentle form of exercise that builds strength, balance, coordination, and focus. Instructor: Mari Lewis

- **Beginner:** An introductory class to basic footwork and movements in Tai Chi, learning the first section of the Traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan.
- **Intermediate:** Study of the second section of the Traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan. Previous study of the beginner's section is required.
- **Advanced Tai Chi:** A review and fine tuning of the Traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan. Previous study of the intermediate section is required.

Weights in Motion: Weights in Motion is a fun, high energy class using light handheld weights. The continuous movement to the beat of the music will strengthen and tone the muscles for a total body workout. Instructor: Shelley Moll

Yogalates: Yogalates is sometimes thought of as a fusion practice of "East meets West," because it merges the ancient Indian practice of yoga with the Western practice of Pilates. It is said to harness the physical and mental benefits of both practices, and its advocates describe it as a comprehensive exercise system. Instructor: Jeannie Stevens Labate

Yoga for Total Health: Learn the basics of Kripalu-based Hatha Yoga in a gentle, warm environment. Students must have their own mat and pillows and be able to get up and down from the floor without help. Instructor: Denise O'Hearn

WCSA Class Descriptions Spring 2021 (continued)

Yoga – Very Gentle Chair: This very gentle class respects all physical limitations and uses a chair for those who can't navigate up and down from the floor. Each class is tailored to the group's specific needs and focuses on postures and breathing techniques. The class ends in a guided meditation and deep relaxation to help us remember that we are perfect as we are. Instructor: Maria Vailakis-Wippick

Yoga for Strength, Relaxation, and Rejuvenation: This class honors where you are in body, mind, and energy. We practice using ancient postures and breathing techniques that help build awareness and strength to improve your posture, develop ease of movement and create an enhanced sense of stability and well-being. Instructor: Maria Vailakis-Wippick

Beginning Yoga: You will learn the foundational postures to help with balance, strength, and flexibility. You will be taught meditation and relaxation techniques for overall well-being. Maria's strength is that she will teach to the needs of the participants in class. Come with an open mind and heal your body and mind. Instructor: Maria Vailakis-Wippick

Rise and Shine Yoga: Focus on maintaining flexibility of the entire body. Attention to range of motion, balance, breath awareness and a light meditation are included. Instructor: Paula Pastorelli-Schooler, R.N., Certified Yoga Therapist

Yoga for Wellbeing: Mindful exploration of breath and movement in a gentle-moderate class, thoughtfully sequenced to increase self-awareness, relieve aches and pains, restore flexibility and strength and experience deep relaxation through guided meditation. Instructor: Paula Pastorelli-Schooler, R.N., Certified Yoga Therapist

Slow Flow Yoga: A sustainable, gentle yoga practice that invites the practitioner from all backgrounds and abilities to build a modified and adaptive personal practice. Slow Flow will help to cultivate appreciation and gratitude for everything your incredible body can do. Instructor: Paula Pastorelli-Schooler, R.N., Certified Yoga Therapist

Zen Flow: A yoga inspired class, stretching and strengthening the body. The calming music and relaxation at the end of class will leave you feeling "Zen". Instructor: Shelley Moll

WCSA Class Descriptions Spring 2021 (continued)

Zumba Gold: Ditch the workout and join the party in this easy to follow dance class. Enjoy the rhythms of the world, including Latin, Swing, Oldies and Pop. Get your workout in through large flowing movements that should not put undue stress on the body, all the while smiling and lifting your spirits with upbeat music and moves. It's cardio and muscle (we sometimes do light weights at the end) and its emphasis is always on FUN! Everyone is encouraged to modify moves for their fitness level, and we are always happy to have newcomers. So, come on--join in! Instructor: Karen Liss

- Foreign Languages:

Conversational French: You will speak French from the moment you walk into class to the moment you leave. This class strives to improve your speaking and listening skills. Instructor: Nell Mednick

Intermediate French: We study from the textbook, French is Fun by Gail Stein, Second edition for advanced students. We discuss handouts and they are emailed to the class every week in advance. Instructor: Nell Mednick

- Support and Discussion Groups:

Afternoon Chat with Staff: Visit with members of the WCSA team from your home via Zoom. This is an opportunity for you to keep in touch with the staff and find out the latest news and happenings.

Friday Weekly Current Events: Facilitator Jon Fox leads a dynamic, interactive discussion on issues throughout the world and on happenings right here in Westport. Feel free to express your opinion in a safe and respected atmosphere.

Focus on Contemporary Issues with Art Gottlieb: Historian Art Gottlieb will lead an in-depth discussion centered solely on one issue in the current news cycle. The featured topic will be examined from every relevant viewpoint and will include active input from the audience. Subject matter will be chosen near the actual presentation date. Those wishing to make suggestions of topics for discussion are invited to contact Mr. Gottlieb at agott@optonline.net.

Just for Women: Join Channe Fodeman, LCSW, for a chat group on Zoom. The group meets to discuss issues or challenges they may be facing in their life and share in a supportive atmosphere. Personal stories will remain strictly confidential. Class Limit: 15

Let Go of Stress & Tension: This is a new class with Deirdre Ekholdt, LCSW. Stress and tension take a toll on the body and mind, but you can learn to let go and relax. In this class you will be guided through proven stress techniques including mindfulness, breathing and guided imagery to experience a state of deep relaxation.

WCSA Class Descriptions Spring 2021 (continued)

Mindful Healing: Finding Peace in the Storm: Learn how to face and transform stress, pain, and illness, manage anxiety and be comfortable with uncertainty. Cultivate resilience to respond to life's challenges and keep a positive attitude. Connect with and develop inner resources and learn practical skills to work with and process difficult emotions of fear, grief, and anger. Learn mindfulness meditation as we train the mind and open the heart to awaken joy, kindness, and compassion. Facilitator: Dr. Paul Epstein

Parkinson's Support: Facilitated by Maureen Matuszewski and Alison Smith, this group will share challenges, techniques, support and knowledge on Parkinson's Disease. Professional guest speakers are often invited to share their knowledge. Family and caregivers are welcome.

WCSA Caregiver Support: Terry Giegengack, MA will be facilitating this support group for those caring for loved ones with chronic illnesses. This program is designed to help learn and improve coping skills, relaxation techniques and develop a support network for those taking care of loved ones. Terry's professional experiences include casework and administrative positions, both in Westport and Fairfield's Departments of Human Services. She is a graduate of Fairfield University with a master's degree in Counseling and Continuing Education.

WCSA Instructor Biographies – Spring 2021

Sandy Adamczyk has taught dance and exercise classes for the past 14 years with the WCSA and Westport Continuing Education. While teaching Ballroom Dancing at Arthur Murray Dance Studio, her students competed and won top student awards and honored Sandy with a Top Teacher award. She has competed and won the New England Ballroom championship throughout the Fred Astaire studios. Sandy's life-long education has equipped her with the expertise to assess student's needs and identify their individual strengths and weaknesses. She possesses a rare combination of extensive and holistic knowledge.

Lisa Arnold teaches at the Silvermine and Guilford Art Centers. Lisa was a Creative Coordinator for Brides Magazine and art lecturer at the School of Visual Arts, NYC, Norwalk Community College and the Parsons School of Design, NY.

Jan Bassin is a writing teacher, program designer and event planner in the literary arts, who believes that the act of writing has transformative power. She is committed to community building, placemaking and forging intergenerational connections through writing. She is the founder and director of The Writer's Workshop at the Westport Center for Senior Activities.

WCSA Instructor Biographies – Spring 2021 (continued)

Dyan DeCastro is passionate about motivating the 50+ population to stay healthy, strong, and pain-free. She has been teaching Essentrics for over seven years and loves that Essentrics helps her students increase strength and mobility in order to maintain their independence. Through gentle, coordinated, and full-body movements, Dyan guides her students towards increased physical vitality and mental well-being.

Deirdre Ekholdt is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) for the Town of Westport Department of Human Services. Deirdre has over 15 years' experience in a variety of settings such as inpatient and outpatient clinics. Deirdre's areas of expertise are in supporting people, dealing with life stressors relating to depression and anxiety, grief and loss issues, and family and relationship issues. Deirdre is a 200-hour RYT Yoga teacher and enjoys teaching mindfulness, meditation and breathing techniques as a way to assist people with stressful situations.

Paul Epstein, ND is a graduate of the National College of Natural Medicine (NCNM), specializing in mind-body integrative medicine and mindful healing. He maintains a thriving private practice in Westport, CT; travels extensively, lecturing, leading workshops and retreats worldwide; and offers imagery and mindfulness healing seminars. Dr. Epstein offers professional training and mentoring for health professionals to support, train and mentor those wanting to integrate mind-body medicine in their therapeutic work.

Channe Fodeman is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in private practice who specializes in life's transitions and aging issues. She earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of California at Berkeley. She has many years of diverse experiences as a social worker, including teaching at the University of Connecticut and the University of Bridgeport.

Terry Giegengack's professional experience includes casework and administrative positions. She served as the Director and Department Head for the Fairfield Department of Human Services, including the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities. Previously, she served as the Assistant Director for Client Services in the Westport Department of Human Services. Her graduate education was completed at Fairfield University with a master's degree in Counseling. Continuing graduate education coursework was earned at the Fordham School of Social Services and at Fairfield University's School for Education and Allied Professions in supervision. Recent training was received with the CT Alzheimer's Association in group facilitation.

Chris Goldbach teaches studio art at the Silvermine Arts Center and at senior centers in lower Fairfield County on Zoom.

WCSA Instructor Biographies – Spring 2021 (continued)

Art Gottlieb is a local historian on subjects of political and military history. He was formerly a professional curator of naval history and the Technical Director of Exhibits at the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in NYC. In these roles, Mr. Gottlieb worked regularly with veterans of all services towards the creation of exhibits accurately illustrating the history of 20th century warfare.

Jeannie Stevens Labate has been teaching Yoga since 2001. Her classes are geared toward creating a safe, warm, and healing environment. Jeannie's teaching comes from a background in a few types of yoga: Ashtanga, Vinyasa, Yin, Children's, Senior Citizens and Chair Yoga. Jeannie has the unique ability to teach a multi-level class whether you are new to yoga or a seasoned practitioner. Her mantra is "Yoga is here to heal you, not hurt you." Just listen to your body and breath.

Mari Lewis is an experienced Tai Chi instructor certified by the International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association. She is a direct disciple of Grand Master Yang Jun 5th generation lineage carrier of the Yang style Tai Chi Chuan.

Karen Liss has been teaching group fitness classes since she was 19 years old. In the decades since, she has reached thousands of people in New York City, Long Island, Westchester, Buffalo and for the past 20 years, Fairfield County. Her emphasis on bringing fun to every class (no matter how difficult the workout) accounts for her constant smile and ability to make people laugh. Her philosophy has always been that everyone is welcome, everyone should experience the joy of movement, and any effort is far better than sitting on the couch!

Wendy Matthews has been playing and teaching the ukulele for two decades. She performs as half of the Edukated Fleas, a ukulele swing duo, with partner Greg Doyle, as well as several other bands, including the jazz trio Swingset. While she favors swing, jazz standards and vintage tunes, she firmly believes that the ukulele is the ideal instrument for all genres of music and will happily put you on the path to playing your favorite tunes.

Nell Mednick is a native of Francophone Switzerland, from the picturesque town of Vevey on Lake Geneva. Nell earned her Baccalaureate in the German speaking city of Basel, where she became fluent in German. At age 18, she joined her parents in México City and after a brief intensive course, she enrolled in the University of México City and graduated with a degree in Spanish literature and Mexican Art History. She later received a degree in Fine Arts from Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, Austria). In 1973, she married an American in Switzerland and moved with her family to the US. Nell started a career in photography and had her own business for event photography until 2012. She loves people and languages!

WCSA Instructor Biographies – Spring 2021 (continued)

Shelley Moll is an ACE (American Council on Exercise) certified Group Fitness Instructor. You might know her from her many years at the Westport Y as the Health and Wellness Director or from Anytime Fitness where she managed the Silver Sneaker program. Her most recent certifications are ACE Certified Senior Exercise Specialist, Bionic Hips and Knees (Exercise for those with hip and knee replacements), Brains and Balance Certification along with Cancer Exercise Specialist, Melt and many other fitness and wellness related certifications. Her years of experience in the fitness industry allow her to provide safe and effective workouts for all.

Denise O'Hearn is a certified Kripalu Yoga Teacher and Reiki Practitioner. She helps people find relief from chronic pain and tension. Denise is a strong yet gentle and compassionate teacher who is enthusiastic about sharing the benefits of yoga and natural healing.

Dick Rauh came to botanical painting in retirement after a career in motion picture special effects. A collection of his work received a gold medal from the Royal Horticultural Society in January 2006 and a Best in Show award. Dick teaches at the New York Botanical Gardens.

Judy Samuels is a certified NASM personal trainer, Corrective Exercise Coach, Precision Nutrition Coach and an AFAA Certified Group Fitness Instructor. Judy's been teaching fitness for over 20 years and especially enjoys working with seniors. She has taught strength training, TRX, Mat Pilates Mix, Core Barre, outdoor fun boot camps, Muscle and Tone, Parkinson's Boxing Circuit Classes and does one-on-one personal training (now through Zoom!). She enjoys running, live theatre, needlepoint and mostly spending time with her family and dog Muffin.

Paula Pastorelli-Schooler is a Certified Yoga Therapist with the International Association of Yoga Therapists (2017) and founder of Inquire Within Yoga for 20 years. With safety as the foundation of her classes, she encourages her students and clients to listen to their inner guidance using breath and posture as tools to cultivate their awareness in building their own practice. She has studied with many masters including her most powerful guide Matt Sanford, who teaches Adaptive Yoga from his wheelchair. Paula is a graduate of the UMASS Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program developed by John Kabat-Zinn.

WCSA Instructor Biographies – Spring 2021 (continued)

Nor Smitobol was born and raised in Bangkok, Thailand, where he earned an architectural degree. Nor holds master's degrees from Pratt Institute and is a licensed architect in NY and PA. For thirty years, Nor worked at the United Nations in NYC and other duty stations. Favorite media: Watercolor, sketch, stained glass, clay work, rock painting, paperwork, and 3D origami.

Maria Vailakis-Wippick has been teaching the ancient art and science of yoga since 2003. She teaches to the needs of the individual and focuses on releasing tensions in the body and expanding the breath as the pathway to peace, well-being, and vitality.